DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 097 701 CS 201 624

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TITLE Communication and Leadership.
INSTITUTION National Association of Secondary School Principals, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 73
NOTE 69p.
AVAILABLE FROM National Association of Secondary School Principals, Dulles International Airport, P.O. Box 17430, Washington, D.C. 20041 ($2.00, Payment must accompany orders of $5.00 or less)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC Not Available from EDRS. PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS *Communication Skills; Higher Education; Interpersonal Relationship; *Interschool Communication; *Leadership; *Nonverbal Communication; *Oral Communication; Parliamentary Procedures; Student School Relationship

ABSTRACT

This monograph defines communication in terms of five characteristics and provides a description of the communication process that is intended to benefit both teachers and students. Following the answer to "What Is Communication?" in chapter 1, the contents include: "The Leader as Communicator," which considers some ways to bring people together and presents ideas both for improving oneself as a communicator and for helping others to communicate; "Basic Skills for the Communicator-Leader," which examines communication skills that are primarily intended to improve public communication; and "Improving Communication Within the Student Council," which emphasizes improving group skills within the school council and reaching out to the school administration and community. The monograph concludes with a list of common parliamentary terms, a quick-reference parliamentary procedure chart, and a selected bibliography. (RB)

Communication and Leadership

by John W. Gray

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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 73-78227
ISBN Number: 0-88210-044-0

Two dollars per copy. Twenty percent discount for 10 or more copies. Special rates for 25 or more copies available upon request. Payment must accompany orders of five dollars or less.

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Chapter 1

What is Communication?

A Poor Connection

Friday afternoon has finally arrived and you have almost survived another week of school. You sit quietly, daydreaming about the weekend. The bell startles you and at the same moment the president of the student council waves to you from across the classroom and says "See you at eight!" You jump to your feet, gather your books together and follow the rushing crowd into the hall. As you move along the crowded hall a male voice from behind you says "Ten days isn't enough, is it?" You have no idea what he is talking about, but you nod in agreement as the crowd pushes you away from the voice. After placing a few books in your locker you move out the door of the school into the warm afternoon sun.

The description above doesn't seem to present an unusual set of events for a typical high school student. As a matter of fact, many readers may find themselves identifying with the person in the description. Every day a set of events similar to this happens to each of us. Let's take a second look at this student's experiences and identify a few of the happenings that we might call communication events.

The act of daydreaming is common to all of us. This is intrapersonal communication or communication with the self. This behavior can be triggered by almost anything;

a word, a sound, a sight, a smell, etc. Our minds are ready at any moment to be carried off into remembering past events or pondering possible future events. This intrapersonal communication can be valuable to us in such things as avoiding past mistakes and planning appropriate actions for the future. On the other hand, casual daydreaming may often be a barrier to communication. Without intending to, we may be lost in our thoughts at the very time when we need to be actively listening, speaking, reading or reacting. The sound of the bell jarred this student from his thoughts; the chain of events that followed, and the student's interpretation of them, were directly related to his daydreaming.

When the student council president called to him the student may not have been in complete control of his senses and may have still been in the transition from daydreaming to reality. The message may or may not have been received and understood. The words "at eight" may have been lost or misinterpreted, it is difficult to remember details when we are surprised, startled, frightened, etc. The message might have been received as "Don't be late!", "Can you skate?", or "Get a date!"

It is staggering to the imagination to realize how often we misunderstand people because our minds are elsewhere. The fault is often with the daydreamer but just as often with the speaker. We blurt, yell, mumble, and toss our messages so carelessly that it is no surprise that we are often misunderstood. We are often so careless that the listener is forced into daydreaming as his only avenue of escape.

The student in our description was puzzled by the remark, "Ten days isn't enough, is it?" This may have been a reference to a portion of the teacher's lecture missed by the daydreamer as he was absorbed in his own thoughts. It may have been a time deadline for the next class assignment announced at the end of the period and also missed by the daydreamer. Or, if the student had been in complete control of his senses and not dazed, rushed, and pushed he might have remembered a pre-

vious conversation with the boy which would make the remark and the sense of the message clear.

Let's look for a moment at the communication that took place outside of the verbal statements. The bell communicated rather dramatically that the class was at an end. It was the bell above all else that contributed to the chain of events which followed. Had the student moved himself slowly from his thoughts to the realities of the classroom he might have made the transition in time to be aware of the sense and details of what followed.

The recognition of the first speaker as the student council president was another nonverbal event. Above all else (the message, the appearance, the voice, etc.), the student recognized the speaker by his social and official position and title. The nonverbal message surrounds and sends the verbal message, and often the nonverbal will act as such a dramatic or impressive package that we will ignore the verbal message. Many of us have heard the expression "What you are is speaking so loudly I can't hear what you're saying."

The student's jump to his feet and hurried exit from the classroom was prompted not only by the bell but by the crowd of classmates as they rushed out of the room. If there had been no communication of a need to hurry, the student might have sat quietly for a few seconds and recovered his senses before leaving the room. But people do not like to think the crowd is leaving them behind, and few want to offer evidence of having been daydreaming.

There are many more communication events, verbal and nonverbal, in the preceding passage; but the point has been made that a great portion of our day-to-day routine is associated directly with communication.

Communication as Process

In general terms communication is a social event. Its function is to enable people to associate with one another and to work cooperatively. It can be a direct avenue to reducing tensions and eliminating problems over which man has control. Although man can do little to control earthquakes and torna-

does, he can do something about many of his social problems such as racial discrimination, corruption in government, neglect of the aging, etc. Communication provides man with the basic tools he needs to make contact with his fellow man and to work toward achieving his (and his fellow man's) day-to-day goals.

In fact, a person will spend most of his waking hours in some type of communicative act. From the very moment he arises in the morning he is communicated with by his environment. His alarm clock tells him it is time to get up, the sun rays coming through the window tell him the type of weather to expect, his body functions tell him if he is in good health. He is almost immediately greeted by some fellow human who starts his daily ritual of speaking and listening.

Most of the acts of communication are performed without much thought or deliberation. We are creatures of habit, and one of our major hajor habits is our daily communication ritual. We are so familiar with our communication habits that the process seems easy and simple. In reality, the communication act is neither easy nor simple. It is a complex interaction of habits, attitudes, knowledge, information, and biases which we use in receiving and sending our messages to each other. What we say, how we say it, and how we react to what others say is all determined by our own complex communication system.

What actually happens when man communicates? In order to answer this question we must first recognize that communication is a process. It is a dynamic cycle of interpersonal influence. A person decides to send a message. As the source, he composes his message and chooses a channel through which he believes his message may best be sent. For example, we may choose the oral channel (speech), the written channel (letters, notes, books, etc.), the visual channel (gestures, posture, pictures, etc.), or perhaps a combination of several channels. The message is sent through this channel to a second person who becomes the receiver. The receiver then interprets the message in terms of his own background and conditioning. In other words, he sees and hears what he has been condi-

tioned and trained to see and hear. The receiver then responds to his own interpretation of the message. At this point the receiver becomes a source and his response is organized as a message to be sent through a selected channel back to the source of the first message. The following model will help explain this cycle:

In this communication cycle both persons act as source and receiver. Each receives the feedback from the other and responds with his own message, thus acting as both receiver and source in completing the cycle. The success of this communication will be determined by: (1) The source's ability to compose a message, to choose an appropriate channel through which to send it, and to interpret accurately the feedback message when the receiver responds; and (2) The receiver's ability to receive accurately the source's message, compose his feedback message, and choose an appropriate channel.

This is obviously an oversimplification of the cycle but it does emphasize the continuous and never-ending process we go through in communicating. We take part in these cycles whether we choose to or not. It is impossible to avoid communicating. We may not be communicating what we intend or wish to communicate but we are communicating something. It is obvious that our messages are often misinterpreted; but we must also realize that even in those moments when we consider ourselves "neutral" or "uninvolved" our behavior is, nevertheless, being interpreted. When we are silent someone may interpret this as apathy or indifference. When we are undecided someone may interpret our actions as uncertain, doubtful, or fearful. We consciously or unconsciously communicate various attitudes and ideas throughout each day of our lives.

Myths About Communication

There are some myths about communication that need to be exposed. Many people think, for instance, that when they tell a person something, they have given it to him and he has re-

ceived it—but this is not the case. Messages are not like slices of pie to be given and received. The misconception is the belief that ideas and meanings are merely transferred or transmitted from one person to another.

Actually, meaning cannot be transmitted at all. It can only be stimulated or aroused in the receiver. The receiver must be an active participant for the cycle of communication to be complete. He must interpret the message sent to him, and in doing so, he usually translates it into something similar yet different from the way the source intended the message. The way I view things and the way you view them are never exactly the same.

When I send you a message I may have my meanings clearly in mind; but because I cannot transfer these meanings to you, I must attempt to stimulate or arouse the meanings that already exist in you. The most common way of doing this is through the use of language (spoken, written, or by way of gesture). The words of a language are merely symbols and do not have meanings. Only people have meanings and my meanings for words will differ from yours. Because we have agreed on a few dictionary definitions we can come close to the same meanings but these will never coincide perfectly.

A word symbol always connotes or brings to the receiver's mind much more than a dictionary definition.

Take the word "block" for instance. What does the word mean? What does it bring to your mind when you hear it? If I said "It is sixteen blocks from my house to the school," would you know exactly how far I live from the school? Much would depend on our concepts of the length of a block. Do I mean a long city block or a standard city block? Perhaps the blocks you would walk en route from my house to school pass through a park where each block is two or three times the length of the average city block.

Another confusion of meanings derived from words comes from context. Actually the word "block" stimulates no real meaning alone, but must be put into a context before it acquires meaning. I can put it into context by surrounding it with other words. I can say "a chip off the old block"; "the child's

building blocks"; "the football player threw a good block"; or "the building is made of concrete blocks"; and you have a better idea of how I mean to use the word "block." A good deal also depends on how the receiver feels about the word he hears. If I am having problems and arguments with the contractor who is building my new home over the types of concrete blocks he is using, (or a "block"), then I may have a negative reaction to hearing the word "block" in any context.

Words are symbols and are simply convenient for speaking of something in its absence or speaking of an abstract idea. Words are neither moral nor immoral, right or wrong. They are merely a system of stimuli we use to retrieve information stored in our brains. This retrieval system works rather well as long as we realize that one word may retrieve one thing from my brain and quite another from yours. The meanings we have for words are restricted to the knowledge and experience we can bring to bear on them. So, as we transmit messages (collections of symbols) we must keep in mind that we are not transferring meaning but sending selected stimuli designed to arouse meanings similar to our own in the mind of the receiver.

Another myth about the nature of communication is that our eyes and ears tell us the truth. Although this may seem evident, there are too many people who believe that all people hear and see the same thing in the same situation. Have you ever heard three or four people describe the same football game or campus demonstration? The person's involvement in the event, his past experiences with football games or demonstrations, and his ability to use the language all contribute to his description of the event. We know it isn't true but we often act as if most people see and hear exactly the same things we do. A person's description of a past event often reveals more about the person than the event. What we talk about and how we talk about it reveals more about how we perceive things than it does about the essential nature of things.

If we can accept the theory that all meanings exist in people, then the value of knowing your listener and the value of audi-

ence analysis becomes evident. It is critical in good communication that each person attempt to understand the ideas and attitudes from the other person's point of view. To understand and communicate with another is to feel how it feels to speak as he speaks.

Defining Communication

We can define communication in many ways. One of the broadest definitions calls it any "information-sharing activity." This definition includes all communication; the electrical impulses from computers, the mating dances of the birds, the thermostat as it relays its messages to the air conditioner, and the coin as it communicates its message of approval to the drink machine and allows the bottle its freedom.

For our purposes we shall restrict the definition to interpersonal communication (between-people communication). In this context we can define communication as "A process involving the organizing and sending of symbols in such a way as to help the receiver create in his own mind the meanings intended by the source." This means that communication is more of an attitude or mental condition that exists between people than a skill.

When we communicate we try to establish a common ground which assists the sender and receiver (the roles are interchangeable) in "tuning each other in." In order to be an efficient communicator we must develop our powers of empathy and concern for our receivers. There is no better way to gain the receiver's ear and hold his attention than to express through our messages a concern for his welfare and a knowledge of his condition. This is not an easy thing to do. It requires time and patience—much more of both than we are usually willing to give.

If communication is an attempt to reach our fellow man and develop common ground, then how do we develop our abilities in this area? The late communication authority, Irving J. Lee, said that the way to become a good communicator was marked by five milestones: (1) one must study the subject matter and theories of communication; (2) he must acquire the ability to

observe other people in the act of communicating and learn from their successes and failures; (3) he must come to understand his own communicative behavior; (4) he must develop the necessary skills (verbal and nonverbal) related to communication activities in our society; and (5) he must learn how to adjust to and assist others in their communication problems. This text is devoted to a consideration of these five milestones. The discussion of each is related to how a person can improve his leadership abilities by improving his communication behavior (both intrapersonal and interpersonal).

Chapter 2

The Leader as Communicator

Any good leader must have a basic understanding of the communication process. He must know what is happening between himself and members of his group as they work together. He must also be aware of what is happening among members of his group. Too many elected leaders are unaware of the communication nets operating within an organization and the many ways in which members are responding to one another. In short, the leader needs a body of knowledge about communication and how it works. With this background he is able to adjust his communication behavior to suit the needs of the situation.

In training leaders we attempt to assist those persons who have "leadership potential." Much of what we call "potential" is related directly to abilities in the areas of communication. Small group leadership, whether centered on one person or shared by more than one, is important to the reaching of agreements and often responsible for failures to do so. The democratic approach is more effective than dictatorial leadership in the forming of a cohesive working unit. Too much permissiveness, on the other hand, leads to a waste of time. The leaders must keep the goals of the group in mind at all times and direct the group in its methods of achieving those goals.

Communication Theory

Too often we set our leaders apart from others and assume that they have certain traits, qualities and abilities which ele-

vate them above the "followers." This is a dangerous assumption since good leaders and good followers have much in common. They are both interested in the welfare of the group they are working with and are seeking common goals. Research has indicated that most groups have many leaders rather than one. There may be several elected leaders but groups also have (1) "task" leaders who focus upon the work or task before the group and guide the work toward a goal, (2) "social-emotional" leaders who assist in preventing conflicts, tensions, and promote group unity, and (3) "emergent" leaders who come forth from the group and assume special responsibilities when the occasion demands. Often these people are not recognized as leaders but their contributions to the total effectiveness of the communication effort in an organization cannot be ignored.

The truly effective elected leader will make himself constantly aware of these unofficial leaders and make good use of their abilities and influence. A basic knowledge of small group interaction will assist leaders in recognizing these people and the functions they perform in the communication net.

Some groups exist totally in terms of the service they can render to the individual group members. Other groups exist to perform a function as an entire group. The functions which the group serves as a unit and for the individual members must both be considered in evaluating the group. If, for some reason, the group ceases to serve the individual needs of its members, the members will soon resign. Also, if the group does not accomplish certain tasks beyond those of individual members, the group itself may cease to exist.

Why Do People Join Groups?

Personal satisfaction. Some groups exist solely to serve the members. The organization may merely be an excuse for the members to get together (bridge clubs, poker parties, social clubs, etc.) The socializing may be far more important than the stated organizational purpose. Provided individual members'

goals of socialization are satisfied, the organization can continue to exist and function.

People join groups in order to acquire information and skills (cooking groups, book clubs, etc.); to gain prestige and status (private clubs, honorary organizations, etc.); and some for therapeutic-expressive reasons (self knowledge and self expression through such groups as art clubs, community theatre groups, sensitivity groups, etc.). All of these groups provide means by which a member may accomplish his own personal goals.

Group Service. Some groups exist primarily to serve other persons or other groups. Student councils and similar governing bodies would fall into this category along with booster clubs, service clubs, labor unions, etc. As these groups carry out their service functions, they usually act as task groups to study and advise, make decisions, or take action.

Groups whose task function is to study and advise will usually be sub-groups such as standing committees. They research and provide information for the larger body. This includes gathering statistics and records, verifying data, presenting alternative courses of action, etc. These are truly service groups and receive their instruction from the larger body.

Some groups are set up as decision-making bodies. The student council would have this task as its primary function. These groups make decisions on matters under their jurisdiction. Their area of jurisdiction is usually well defined in the group's constitution and by-laws. These groups may or may not take final action on their decision, depending on the action power given them by their constitutions and by-laws. The most common method of approaching the task of decision making is through "problem-solving discussion." This method is described in detail in Chapter 3.

The task of taking action is the responsibility of many groups. These are usually small groups and are normally acting on the authority and with the counsel of a larger body. While all members of the larger body may be involved in mak-

ing the decisions and affected by the actions to be taken, only a limited few can be involved in implementing them.

The same group or organization can serve all of these task functions at various times. It is essential that the constitution and by-laws provide a clear description of the duties and functions of the larger body as well as the sub-groups within that body. See Chapter 4 for further suggestions concerning the constitution and by-laws.

Any good leader must also be aware of group attitudes contributing to good communication. He should be goal oriented, show a respect for inquiry, be knowledgeable about human interaction, and be sensitive to the needs of group members.

Goal Orientation

The task of leading the group toward a stated goal is a difficult one and is often hard work. The leader should keep his mind on the immediate task and make every effort to keep his meetings moving toward that specific goal. Rambling should be kept to a minimum, and, if the group is sidetracked, it is the leader's responsibility to get the discussion focused on the original goal and moving again in a productive manner.

Many times a leader will either ignore or side-step the group's goals, giving preference to his own personal goals. If this is deliberate, the individual is a poor leader and his selfish motives will cause communication problems within the group. If the leader has persuaded himself that he knows what is best for the group, he may use his power and influence to sway the group to his ideas. There is no reason why a leader should not exercise his talents of persuasion, but he must be group-oriented and lead the group in achieving group goals.

Respect for Inquiry

Obviously, the best decisions are made by the best-informed groups. The group that arrives at meetings ill-informed usually ends up "pooling their ignorance" and voting on it. A good leader will keep his members informed both between

meetings and during meetings. Distributing duplicated materials a few days ahead of time results in better decisions. Members will often ignore these materials, so every effort should be made to generate a respect for inquiry. Strive for a common desire to see all issues researched and understood as background for decision making.

Improving human interaction. We often speak of "alienation" in today's society. We seem to have lost some of our ability to relate successfully to one another. Population growth, crowded cities, and the dehumanizing effect of advanced technology have all been singled out and blamed for making us feel less significant as human beings. Believing this, we search for new and better ways to relate in groups. Good leaders are especially aware of the problems involved in social interaction. What can we do as leaders to mend and heal these feelings of alienation?

Some Ways to Bring People Together

Seek a wide range of communication experiences. Citizens, young and old, complain about the actions of their state government, their city council, or their student council, but they fail to involve themselves in the activities of these groups. A good leader should take every opportunity for social interaction and not confine himself to interacting with a single group of people time and again. In this way he will learn to adjust to new conditions and new ways of thinking. As he witnesses the advantages of these experiences he will see to it that his group involves itself in a wide range of interactions with groups who do not think and act in the same manner.

For example, the best way I can think of to learn how to communicate with the high school principal and the board of education is to seek opportunities to interact with these people—not to seek opportunities to argue and defend your views and rights, but to attempt to create situations in which you and your group can learn how the other group thinks and reacts. Making an honest attempt at viewing issues from the other person's point of view is the first and most essential step toward understanding and communication.

Seek common ground. All individuals have differences and similarities. Both are essential to a well-developed personality but the points they have in common—the likenesses—are most productive in interaction. A good technique to use when you are leading a group troubled by differences and conflicts is to allow plenty of time for a "get acquainted" period. At these meetings the group should be led in discussing pleasant subjects and cooperating together on tasks where little or no conflict exists. Although many of these can be social affairs or parties, some should be task-related activities where the members discover that they can work together despite their differences. Nothing provides a more cohesive group than a common goal accepted by all members as worthwhile for the group and beneficial to each member.

Seek an affirmative approach. Avoid a negative approach to group action. This sounds obvious but there are those who speak at length about what they *don't like*. They aren't nearly as articulate about what they *do like* or what is good in the present system. If you make an affirmative statement, we know where you stand. If you make a negative statement, we may have no idea where you stand. The affirmation contains more information than the negation.

This is also true of the "active" and "passive" responses. The active response carries much information and is supportive as an affirmation of your ideas, but the passive response leaves us uncertain as to your ideas. When you ask someone to serve as a committee chairman and he responds with "I'll be happy to do it, although I am sure I will need your help!" You recognize in his statement an active and affirmative attitude although he expressed his need for assistance. If he had said "I guess so, but I can't do it unless you help me!" you recognize in his statement a passive and negative attitude although he has expressed essentially the same idea. A leader standing before a noisy group will get a better response by saying "If we could have quiet, we could get the meeting started." than with "If you can't be quiet, you know I can't start the meeting."

Seek a supportive climate. Good leaders must seek a supportive rather than a defensive climate for group interaction. In

describing these two climates Jack R. Gibb, a researcher in group theory, contrasts them in this fashion:[1]

Supportive	Defensive
Description	Evaluation
Problem Orientation	Control
Spontaneity	Strategy
Empathy	Neutrality
Equality	Superiority
Provisionalism	Certainty

Gibb is suggesting that speech or other types of communication which appear to be evaluative and critical increase defensiveness on the part of the receiver. On the other hand, when a message is received as descriptive it minimizes the feelings of defensiveness.

When material is presented in such a way that the receiver does not feel obligated or criticized, he is more likely to feel positive toward the sender and his message. In other words, it is better to say "Hi, Joe! We missed you at our last meeting. If we can get together I'll fill you in on what was discussed." than to say "You missed our meeting, Joe! It's your responsibility to come to the meetings. I can't be spending extra time helping you catch up." The first remark is descriptive and gives Joe the benefit of the doubt concerning his absence. This statement provides Joe with an opportunity to explain his absence. The second remark is evaluative and communicates an attitude of criticism. It puts Joe on the defensive since it is accusing and does not reflect understanding.

At a later time, after numerous absences, you may wish to confront Joe with his responsibilities but the tendency of some leaders is to judge too quickly and to respond with an evaluation. Since our speech is so often judgmental, it is a good idea to form good habits of description as early as possible.

Gibb also suggests that people do not like to feel controlled or caught in a trap. We may not intend to express the atti-

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[1]Jack R. Gibb, "Defensive Communication," *The Journal of Communication*, XI (1961): 141–148.

tude of control but often our strategy in trying to persuade or influence someone will become obvious to the listener and create defensive behavior. People prefer a spontaneous atmosphere where they can collaborate and participate in the solutions to their problems. They like to sit down together, define their problem, and seek a group solution. Although you may find it quicker and easier to plan the annual banquet yourself, there is a better chance of satisfying the members of your group if you allow for group participation in the various decisions regarding the event.

Leaders are often surprised at how much easier their job becomes as they delegate responsibilities to group members and solicit ideas for improving decisions affecting the group. Although this procedure is time-consuming and often not as efficient as the other methods, research has proven the solution to be more satisfying to all concerned.

A feeling of superiority is another climate causing defensiveness. Although the average person recognizes within himself that there are others superior to himself in wealth, intellect, power, etc., he is not supportive of ideas and people who remind him of this fact. If the sender of a message communicates an attitude of superiority, the receiver is likely to think of him as a person who would not be willing to enter into a cooperative problem-solving relationship with him.

The same is true with an attitude of neutrality. If the sender of a message communicates a lack of concern or a neutral feeling toward the receiver's problems, the receiver will be likely to adopt a defensive attitude. In the case of Joe's having missed an important meeting, the descriptive and positive response showed a concern for Joe's absence but was not offensive. If the leader had ignored Joe's absence he might have communicated a neutral attitude and Joe might have felt that no one cared if he attended the meeting. If the sender demonstrates a respect for the receiver's problems and a genuine desire to assist him, the result will likely be supportive.

Gibb's final category suggests that people view a dogmatic leader as a threat and will tend to develop a defensive attitude toward him. If the leader can demonstrate that he too is search-

ing for answers he is more likely to receive supportive behavior from the group. The leader who is always "right" will continue to have difficulties with all others who are "wrong" and feel that he must defend his truths at all times. This, in turn, will cause the group members to feel that they too must defend themselves rather than cooperate with the group.

Watching Others Communicate

We learn a good deal of our communication behavior by observing others in the act of communicating. If we observe carefully and thoughtfully there will be no need to experience some of the failures made by others. So, one of the first important tasks of a good leader is to learn and to observe others, not passively but with an eager desire to learn why they are successful or unsuccessful in their attempts to communicate. He should be aware of the entire communication event: the behavior leading up to the event (how the communicator prepared for the experience); the behavior during the event (how the communicator looked and sounded and how he used his surroundings); and the behavior following the event (the communicator's reactions to criticism, praise, misunderstandings, apathy, etc.).

It is easy enough to listen to and to imitate our peers who have the same general interests and activities as ourselves, but it is difficult to be open-minded enough to listen carefully and observe closely the good communication skills used by our elders, enemies, subordinates and competitors. Although these people may not be of our age or our philosophy, we must realize that they have had experiences on which they base their actions. We may never have the chance to experience the same things they have (or we may prefer not to experience them but we can profit from a knowledge and understanding of their behavior. We may not wish to be like them, but we should know we can learn from them. What works for them may not work for us, but there is no way to determine this without a knowledge of their experiences.

Another important factor to consider in observing the communicative behavior of others is the area of goals. As

you judge the communicative ability of a person, you should evaluate him by what you know of his goals and purposes and not exclusively by his behavior. We know that good intentions often go awry and do not end in good behavior. If we judge a communicator by what we consider good or bad actions, we are only observing the surface of his communication pattern. What is he attempting to accomplish? Is it a worthwhile goal? Is it a selfish goal? Is it a short-range or long-range goal?

For instance, a leader may allow his group a good deal of flexibility in its behavior during a meeting (traffic in and out, conversations between members, noise, etc.). Observing merely the outward behavior in his meetings, we might think of him as a poor leader with little control over his group. If we knew, however, that his purpose in all this was to mend and heal old wounds among his members caused by a previous dictatorial leader, and to enable a more cohesive group to emerge, we might have a new understanding of his abilities as a leader.

We need to observe the sending communicator as a medium or channel through which his message travels. His reputation as to ability, honesty, etc., will affect how he is received by his audience. Does he appear to be one of the group or is he aloof and detached from the group? Both attitudes may have advantages depending on the communicator's goal and the composition of his group. People elect leaders for many reasons but one frequent reason is image. His physical appearance, actions, and ideas seem to be a channel through which the members feel they can communicate.

Understanding Yourself as Communicator

Since the self-concept is discussed in Chapter 3, it will be sufficient at this point to say that a leader's concept of his group and its goals will depend directly on his concept of himself and his goals. A good leader, then, must seek to understand himself, for it may be argued that no person can establish contact and interact with another "self" until he has some

conception of his own self. There are no dimensions of the self in general that are not related directly to the self as communicator.

It must be emphasized again that communication is a process and not a skill. People communicate whether they intend to or not. Our society and our individual culture presents us with a set of communication opportunities. We have public gatherings where public speaking is an appropriate method for addressing a group; we have small informal meetings where the interview method or the discussion method becomes appropriate; we have mass media which calls for a highly specialized form of public address; and we have millions of other circumstances in which social skills are needed to take advantage of the communication opportunities. We must not, however, equate the basic social skills surrounding communication events with the communication process. All leaders must develop the social skills before society will permit them into the communication arena where influential decisions are made. Once they are in the arena, their abilities with the social skills will not assure them of communication.

Simply because you have the social skills demanded of a public speaker (poise, confidence, a good voice, gestures, vocabulary, etc.) you must not assume that these in any way assure you of an ability to communicate with your audience. These social skills will demonstrate to your listeners that you know the "rules of the game" and will pave the way socially for you to gain a hearing from them. Once you are allowed these "liberties" with the audience and once they have accepted your role as a speaker, then, and only then, can you interact with the individual members of the audience in a fashion that will produce communication.

Your success as communicator will depend on such things as: your understanding of the audience goals, your ability to empathize with your audience, your understanding of human interactions, your understanding of yourself and your goals, your willingness and ability to seek common ground with the audience, and your knowledge of and experience with the

subject under discussion. Chapter 3 includes more detail on these basic social skills related to the communicator-leader.

Helping Others to Communicate

It is obvious that the ability to communicate is not necessarily something we can consciously learn. Many good communicators and leaders cannot explain the reasons for their successes. Others, however, have studied the communication process and have examined their communicative behavior to the point that they are reasonably accurate in assessing the reasons for their successes. This latter group has an advantage in that they are often capable of assisting others with communication problems, based on their understanding of their own experiences.

There are a number of ways a leader can assist members of his group with communication problems. The most obvious method is by setting a good example. He can instill cooperation by being cooperative, or patience by being patient. He can ask himself if he can *be* in some way which the group will perceive as trustworthy and helpful. This helping relationship will provide opportunities for further assistance with human relations problems within the group.[2]

A second method is to meet often with those you have placed in charge of sub-groups. These people should be left to do their work without your hovering over them, but they often appreciate regular meetings at which they can relate some of their problems and enlist your help without having to call on you personally. Even though your door may be open to them, they will frequently think of an appointment with you concerning a problem as admitting their inability to handle it themselves. The regularly scheduled meeting will allow access to you within the climate of "our problems" rather than "my problems."

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[2]For a detailed discussion of the "helping relationship" see Carl R. Roger's *On Becoming a Person*. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1961.

A third method is the use of workshops and conferences. If you feel that the people in your organization need training in the areas of the basic skills (discussion methods, parliamentary procedure, sales techniques, etc.) you may wish to organize a workshop or conference on the subject. Some leaders prefer to poll their groups to discover skills the groups are interested in studying. Outside consultants (teachers, lawyers, ministers, etc.) are often called on to make presentations and offer ideas from a more objective point of view than can be offered by group members. Workshops for officers are helpful in developing leadership skills and creating a cohesive relationship among a group of newly elected officers. Conferences for faculty or parent leaders are helpful in erasing barriers before they become communication problems. Demonstrations of group problem-solving for new committees act as a springboard for better committee work.

A good leader uses every method at his disposal to improve the communicative ability of his group. As the group improves, the leader's job is made more pleasant and rewarding while the total efficiency of the group in achieving its goals is improved.

Chapter 3

Basic Skills for the Communicator-Leader

Communication with the self (intrapersonal) and communication with others (interpersonal) cannot occur outside of a social context. What we think about and the words we use in self-talk are determined primarily by our past interpersonal associations with others. A good leader, therefore, must first attempt to understand himself (the beginning point for all his communicative efforts) and then must master the basic social skills surrounding communication events in his culture. This chapter explores the intrapersonal skills as they relate to preparing the "self" for communication, and the interpersonal skills as they provide social opportunities for communication within groups.

Skills for Communicating With Yourself

Any communication must be closely associated with a useful and realistic perception of the self. Your effectiveness as a communicator-leader will depend in no small degree upon your self-image, the extent to which others accept that image, and the interaction of your image of yourself and their image of you.

Our self-concept is the total of the things we feel we know about ourselves through our interaction with others. Most of these we have validated through our experiences. We characterize ourselves as: "a good mixer," "a fat person," "an

athletic person," "a person of no talent," "a leader of men," "not that kind of girl," "an average person," etc. We form a large part of these opinions of ourselves from observing others' reactions to us. At times we overestimate ourselves and at other times we underestimate ourselves. It is extremely difficult to see ourselves as others see us.

Self-concepts

Early self-concepts. As very small children, we are told who we are both by name and by definition. We learn that we are a male child, or that we have blond curly hair and along with these are given impressions as to whether they are good or bad characteristics. The parents may have wanted a girl and, without realizing it, communicate this fact to the child. As a result, he begins to think that being a boy is bad and his self-concept is injured. He may go through life with an "I'm not O.K." feeling and never expect to receive anything more than second best out of life, and, in turn, may never give more than second best to others. However, if an attribute is complimented often enough, the child internalizes this as part of his self-concept and perhaps takes on attitudes of pride and confidence. This may contribute to an "I'm O.K." feeling for him.

As we grow older we put many of these aspects of our self-concept to the test of experience. If done properly, this testing is healthy and should end in a much more realistic view of self. If a high school student fails a few math exams, he begins to develop the "I am not mathematically inclined" syndrome; and if he attempts to avoid all experiences related to math, he may continue with this syndrome as part of his self-concept. If he decides to put it to the test, he may confirm his fears about his abilities in math or he may find that his fears were without foundation and that he is capable of successes in mathematics.

Self-concepts resulting from comparison. We constantly compare our performances to those of others. For instance, your opinion that you are a good golfer may be lessened, confirmed, or strengthened by observing others playing golf and by playing golf with them. The belief that you have musical

talent is eroded, verified, or strengthened by the comparisons you make between your ability and the ability demonstrated by others you have observed. If you consistently win at tennis your concept of yourself as a tennis player grows; but if you lose more often then you win, your concept of yourself in this area suffers.

We also make comparisons in the area of leadership. If most of a person's attempts at seeking office and leadership positions have been successful, his concept of himself as a leader blossoms. If he has sought office and has been defeated regularly, or if he has taken an active role in organizations and has seldom been offered leadership positions, his concept of himself as a leader suffers.

Some leaders think of themselves as successful because of their good ideas and magnetic personality when, in reality, they were chosen as leaders because of popularity arising from their "good looks" or "athletic ability." These leaders' self-concept is a product of their own mind. Their image to the group may be one of "dumb beauty" or "popular jock," nevertheless admired and respected by the group.

The leaders' image and the images the groups have of the leaders may very likely come in conflict and present serious communication problems. The best way to prevent this condition is to seek as honest and objective a self-concept as possible. Those not playing leadership roles may find it easier to live with their myths about themselves. The leader is subjected to a close evaluation by the group and must be aware of how he appears to others. In order to be truly successful he must, through talking and listening to others, arrive at what he hopes are realistic conclusions about himself, his problems, his hopes, his desires. He wants to present himself in as favorable a light as possible in order to gain acceptance and to be respected by others.

Understanding the self-concept. The first intrapersonal skill a leader must develop is the ability to create continuous self-inventory. You have lived with yourself a long time but do you understand the real you? The typical person has never made a serious self-inventory. This inventory should include

such questions as: (1) Is there more than one me? (2) Are there realities beyond my realities? (3) What do I know of my background? (4) What do I know of my goals and purposes? (5) Am I realistic about my abilities and limitations? (6) Which role am I playing now?

Although there are two primary "you's"—you as you see yourself, and you as others see you—there is a you for every individual role you play. There is a you that is a student to your teachers, there is a you that is a child to your parents, there is a you that is a boss to your employees, etc. There is really nothing harmful about the roles themselves as long as we are aware of the roles and how they affect our communication with others. Playing these roles is a constructive method of exploring our potential for growth and change. Most of our role playing is not imitation but identification; we play those roles we admire. The ability to identify with new roles helps us adjust to life demands and prevents our clinging to old obsolete roles or infantile ones.

A Self-Inventory

Recognizing the roles we play is a very necessary part of self-knowledge, especially the limitations of our roles. "**What kind of role do I play when I am a leader?**" Do I play the role of a dictator or a democratic leader? Am I an advocate or a partner in problem-solving discussions? Each set of circumstances will dictate which role will be most successful. The most reliable leadership roles in student councils seem to be those of service. Since the student council is a representative group organized to serve the student body, the leadership tasks are recognized as service tasks. For instance, the student council president is chosen to lead the other elected officers and the student body in achieving common goals. He will be most successful when he is flexible enough to fit into the group patterns and demands, realizing that his responsibility is to work toward the group's goals.

A second question the leader should ask himself in his self-inventory is: "**Are there realities beyond my realities?**" Do I see things as they really are or as I am conditioned to see

them? Our background provides each of us with a set of goggles and earphones through which we view and hear the world.

What we observe and experience is our reality and ours alone. Regardless of how we perceive a given situation there are others whose frameworks of reality seldom parallel our realities. Your father's frame of realities is in large part imposed by his parents. Your boss has been conditioned to a certain set of rules and behaviors by his superiors and views his world from that perspective. Your teacher has been influenced by her teachers and your minister by his ministers. These various realities exist regardless of whether you wish to recognize them or not. The beliefs people have about religion, sex, government, education, etc., are as much a set of realities to them as a wall is a reality to you. A good leader must work within the framework of other people's realities. If you push your point (your reality) too hard you may win the point but lose the respect of your group, or you may prove your point without regard for what would be satisfying to the group.

The third question to ask yourself in your self-inventory is "**What do I know of my background?**" In other words, do you know the sources of your realities? You might try examining your parents feelings about their homes and lives as they grew up. How do your grandparents and parents feel about success and failure, law and order, religion, etc.? You do not have to agree with their views, but a knowledge of why they are the way they are might be a big step toward understanding why you are the way you are.

You might also take a close look at the general atmosphere and basic communication patterns of your home. Does your family sit down together and calmly discuss their differences, or is there a dictatorship with either your father or mother (or both) demanding their way? If it is the latter, have you picked up some of the habits of your parents and developed into an authoritarian leader? If it is the former, are you frustrated and confused when bickering and shouting become a part of your group? An analysis of your home atmosphere may throw some light on your reactions to groups and their behavior.

A close look at the influence of your church on your way of thinking can also be useful to you as a leader. If a member of your group suggested that a Sunday morning bingo game would make a good money-making project, you might have a negative reaction to the suggestion. If you analyzed your reaction you might find that it stemmed from your religious training. If you analyzed it further you might realize that the member making the suggestion undoubtedly had a different religious background to yours. Although you need not agree with the member's suggestion, a little understanding on your part might prevent a serious communication breakdown.

Similar conditioning is caused by our educational background. It is not uncommon to find a person without a formal education resenting a person who has such an education or vice versa. The reasons for their feeling this way vary and are of little concern here. The important thing to remember is that they do feel strongly about it. As a leader you will waste time and energy if you try to re-train their thinking. It is much more practical to take a look at the goals in communicating and alter the communication reactions to enable the two people to work together despite their differences.

A well-educated and highly-trained leader may become impatient and intolerant of a member of his group who does not grasp ideas quickly. The reverse of this is as often true. An uneducated leader is impatient and intolerant of an educated member who grasps and articulates ideas better than he does. Try to use this as a rule-of-thumb: every criticism, evaluation, and judgment you make becomes a part of you and, sooner or later, will be evidenced in your communication and will be a part of your communicative self.

The fourth question you can use in your self-inventory is "**What do I know of my goals and purposes?**" Throughout our lives we have all used our communicative abilities to amplify our own egoes. We have constantly worked at getting others to fulfill our needs. We have coaxed, cajoled, nagged, and persuaded until we have found those areas where we have powerful influence over our fellow man. A baby can cry and receive his bottle; a toddler can say "Unk" and point to get what he

wants long before he learns to talk; a first grader may cry to get her way; a teen-ager may sulk or rebel to get what he wants; and an adult may coerce, demand, persuade, or threaten to get others to do his bidding. Most of these behaviors are centered around achieving goals of one kind or another.

In order to reach some goals we would go to great lengths with our persuasion. With other goals we may quit after one or two feeble attempts. The leader must decide where he has placed his values. What is important for him to achieve? The good leader will realize that the most important consideration facing him as he maps his strategy is how to demonstrate respect for his fellow man. All humans want to feel worthy and are dependent on others for words of encouragement concerning their worth. The persons most effective in providing this encouragement are the leaders. Persons with potential power over others have great influence with their statements of personal regard.

Another issue of concern to the leader is "Are my goals compatible with the goals of the group I am leading?" The leader defines his own role but he also influences the definition of the roles and responsibilities of his subordinates. The image of worth the member has of himself is most often the result of the leader's expression of the member's worth. This may be done directly with the easily recognized "put-down," or indirectly, by ignoring the member, failing to comment on his work, failing to give proper recognition for a job well done, etc. Careless handling of human respect will arouse anxiety and insecurity which can fester and grow until they erupt in violent disagreements, disorder, and distrust. Since we define ourselves in our relationships with others, we cannot tolerate contacts with people who express no personal regard or acceptance of us as worthy humans.

The fifth question in our self-inventory is "**Am I realistic about my abilities and limitations?**" Do you have the ability to arouse fervent allegiance in others? Are you willing and able to work harder than most people? Can you analyze problems verbally? Can you speak clearly and to the point? Can

you make suggestions in an attractive manner? Do you identify with the group you lead? If you can honestly answer these questions affirmatively, you are considered to have the basic traits of a leader.

Although there is no set list of the characteristics of a good leader there are some basic attributes that are found in most successful leaders. The first is an ability to discern the aspirations and needs of a group. This simply means that a leader is sensitive to the needs and desires of his group. The second is an ability to verbalize these needs in a language that the group can identify with. The leader must be the "mouthpiece" for his group. The third is an ability to describe and justify either his action or the group's action. He often must justify his actions in attempting to satisfy the group's needs or the group's action in attempting to justify its own needs. In general he must be a person who can maintain a strong, positive interpersonal relationship with the individual members of his group. He takes advantage of the abilities he knows he possesses and seeks constantly to improve himself in areas where he knows he is lacking.

The sixth and final question in our self-inventory is "**Which role am I playing now?**" The leader is the person who is willing to take center stage but is aware of the many roles he must play. On some occasions he must play the role of the "neutral coordinator." For example he may be involved in a problem-solving discussion where each person in the group is encouraged to participate in making the discussions. In this case he would attempt to play a role that closely parallels the roles played by other members of the group. On other occasions he must play the role of "justifier." He may be asked to justify his bosses' (or the administration's) actions to his group or vice versa. He may even be called on to help his group feel justified about their own existence. On still other occasions he may be called on to play the roles of "peacemaker," "referee," "counselor," etc.

The leader must develop the ability to analyze the situation quickly and to take on the most appropriate and helpful role. There are leaders who recognize only one leadership role:

"THE BOSS." These leaders feel the group must do all the adapting while they remain the constant and steadfast "last word" on all issues. These individuals are better described as dictators than leaders.

Positive Thinking

A leader with a good self-concept will develop a positive attitude. He will view life as a direction and not a destination. He will be open to new people and new experiences as a method of enjoying the *now*. Although he may dislike some people's actions, he has an "O.K." feeling toward them, preferring to see their good points as he lives and works with them. He will view his experiences as stimulating and promising rather than threatening.

This positive attitude is best developed by: (1) understanding yourself (achieved through the earlier mentioned self-inventory), (2) developing a "helping relationship" toward persons you lead (avoiding a manipulative behavior and seeking, instead, to concentrate your effort on promoting growth and fulfillment in others), and (3) believing in the goals agreed upon by your group (accepting leadership positions only with groups whose goals you can actively support).

Mental Preparation

A good leader must have sensible, practical ideas and know-how to translate them into action. He must be well informed on issues and methods related to his group's function and structure. This requires a high degree of mental preparation achieved through: (1) increased knowledge, (2) broad and varied experiences, (3) a sharpened accuracy of perception, and (4) a constantly improving memory.

The quality and quantity of knowledge of any subject are determining factors in the accuracy and reliability of your thinking on that subject. Very few groups will select and respect leaders who are not willing to pay the price of hard study. A continuing program of reading and study will assist

leaders in the tough decisions required by their positions. Informed leadership is the result of informed thinking. See the bibliography at the end of this book for selected readings of importance to leaders.

As you seek leadership roles you should move beyond your usual areas of special interest into stimulating new areas. In order to lead a group of people with varied backgrounds and philosophies, it is necessary to broaden your interests and experiences. Although you will have your own special talents and interests in music, art, theater, sports, books, etc., you need to expose yourself to adjacent and related areas in order to better understand how others think.

The effective leader can also contribute to his mental preparation through improving his perceptive accuracy. He needs first to test the accuracy of his perception by learning to compare it with reality and truth. If he is honest in this, he will discover that he often perceives things as he wishes they were rather than as they are. If you are opposed to a new boy in your school running for student council president, you may think of his personality as "arrogant" and "boastful." Those who support him for the office may see his personality as "forceful" and "courageous."

We tend to perceive things from our own point of view without regard for what may be the truth of the situation. If we are to lead others in cooperative tasks we must learn to reserve our judgment of others until we know all the facts and have tested our perceptions against the evidence presented by these facts. The more we are alert to the strong motivations affecting our lives (basic desires, drives, ambitions, etc.), the more we will recognize the motivations affecting others. This knowledge can improve our perceptive accuracy.

Skills for Communicating With Others

One of man's most basic drives is the desire to influence other men to interact with their fellow man. In seeking interaction, a person should always be sensitive to the demands

of the communication situation and try to determine the social demands between himself and others. Again, we must think of communication as a process and not as a skill. The interpersonal skills surrounding the acts of communication are primarily social skills and are demanding on the communicator-leader. He must learn these skills before the individual or group will permit him to enter into a communicative interaction.

One-to-One Communication

When you attempt to communicate with one other person, you will encounter him either in an informal conversational setting or in a more or less formal interview. In conversation the setting is primarily social (telling your friend about a blind date, chatter at a party, passing the time of day with a friend, etc.). There may be hidden motives in such conversations but generally the two persons merely enjoy each other's company.

The interview is a more formal confrontation and implies that the two of you are meeting by appointment for a specific purpose. This ritual may begin with social conversation but it will soon move to the item of business that brought the two of you together.

Leaders will experience this one-to-one communication setting more frequently than any other. They will have numerous casual conversations with members of their group and many opportunities for interviews and conferences with individuals. The following are a few basic considerations in approaching any one-to-one communication setting.

A Note, A Phone Call, or a Face-to-Face Meeting?

The methods you use may have a strong influence on the outcome of the encounter. Should you write him a note, call him on the phone, or meet with him face-to-face? All methods have their advantages and disadvantages.

If you decide to use written communication (a letter, telegram, note, memorandum, etc.) you must realize the disadvantages of the time lapse between messages, the lack of personal contact with voice and sight, and the lack of immediate feedback in the form of questions. If your message lacks controversy and does not require immediate feedback, you might consider using the written medium. Using the written form of communication you do have the advantages of less frequent meetings, less travel to and from meetings, and more convenience; since there will be fewer interruptions of both person's regularly scheduled activities and a more accurate record of messages sent.

The telephone is a useful method for one-to-one communication for many of the same reasons as written communication—it saves time and effort. The phone call is usually considered more personal than the written note and does allow for immediate feedback. It is a quick and easy way to stay in touch with your members when meetings are not convenient.

The face-to-face meeting, although not the easiest or most convenient method has proven to be the most effective in most cases. It is especially effective in settings where you must influence a member to take a particular action. The face-to-face interaction requires more attention and concentration than the other methods and will allow effective use of vocal and bodily action. People seem more fully influenced by this method, and the commitments made by people in this setting seem to be longer lasting than in the other settings.

These past interactions will tend to set patterns for future interactions. Have you found that you have had more difficulty in articulating your ideas with one person listening than with a group listening? Are you disturbed at the idea of sitting down with a person who disagrees with you and working out a solution? All of these attitudes will influence your behavior in one-to-one situations. Try to avoid letting these attitudes prevent the use of one-to-one interaction when it is needed.

Role Playing in One-to-One Communication

We all play roles appropriate to our surroundings and purposes. In the one-to-one situation the roles may be dictated by the label given to the relationship between the two people. It may be labeled a "teacher-student" interview, with each person expected to play the role appropriate to this type of interview. Or it may be labeled a "leader-follower" interview and each role will be dictated by how the leader views himself in relation to the follower, and how the follower views himself in relation to the leader. If the roles are not this well-defined, they will, nevertheless, still be determined by how the two people view themselves and each other.

For example, if I am president of my student council and I have set up an interview with the chairman of the social committee, I might view myself as a very important person and the committee chairman as "someone with a small job." The committee chairman may view the roles in a very different manner. He may view himself as the important person who holds the social life of the organization together and as a key figure in the council activities. He may view me as a "mere symbol" who enjoys telling the members what to do but doesn't do much of the work. If we meet for the interview and play the roles as we see them the result may be a complete communication breakdown.

A good leader will make a self-inventory of his roles and attempt to play them to the best communicative advantage. He will also make himself aware of the role playing of the other person and its effect on the communication between them.

Creating an Atmosphere of Confidence

For any productive exchange to occur between two people they must place a certain amount of trust in each other. A good leader must assure the other person of a certain degree of privacy and confidence. Although most one-to-one settings do not require extreme privacy, the amount and quality of interaction is often determined by how many interruptions are al-

lowed and how open and frank the two people feel that they can be in the setting. If there is an atmosphere of quiet confidence and cooperation, the stage is set for an effective one-to-one interaction.

In all one-to-one communication settings the leader should be able to:

- Reassure his receiver so that he feels free from any threat as a result of what he reveals.
- Ask questions that will bring out the desired information.
- Provide a "helping relationship" for the receiver which will encourage and support him.
- Withstand the emotional stress and social pressures that are sure to be in any communication setting.
- Establish common ground as soon as possible and demonstrate a tolerance of the other person's point of view.
- Provide clear and accurate feedback to prevent the other person from misunderstanding.
- Read the other person's feedback (verbal and non-verbal) as a method of understanding his view of the world and as a springboard for the next response.

Small Group Communication

The second most common form of interpersonal communication is the interaction in small groups (a small group is usually anywhere from 3 to 50 members). Civic groups, families, educational groups, therapy groups, boards of trustees, student councils, business conferences, and other groups of similar size rely heavily on small group interaction for their existence and maintenance. It is nearly impossible to avoid participating in one or more of these groups. Although these groups may have a wide variety of purposes (mutual support, sharing information, etc.) the general purpose of them al centered around problem solving and decision making.

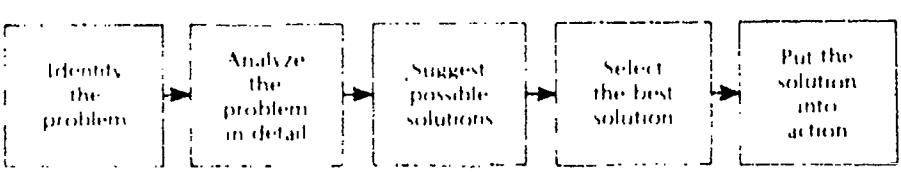
Group decisions are often preferred over decisions made by individuals for many reasons. First, the contribution of resource information made by several persons is usually more

complete than with one person. Second, the comparing of experiences and recommended solutions is possible among a group. Third, the social motivation is higher in groups since people can enjoy a feeling of high morale and team spirit. Fourth, the responsibility for the decisions can be shared among the members. Fifth, the members are usually more willing to live with and cooperate with a decision in which they had a voice.

William S. Smith, in his *Group Problem-Solving Through Discussion*, recommends small group work as one of the essential human interactions in a democracy.

> One of the most serious weaknesses of democracy today is the failure to use group processes for decision-making at the local level. Local leaders may usurp decision-making as their responsibility. . . . Parents. . . wish to decide how the family money will be spent, when and where the family will vacation, and what sort of relations it will have with the neighbors. When a parent will not allow family members to participate in decision-making to the limits of their potential, he is weakening democracy far more effectively than can a communist who speaks at a college assembly. The principal who "runs" the school, the mayor who dominates the city council, the church that dictates behavior to its members . . . —all weaken democracy by demonstrating to those whom they dominate that practical, day-to-day procedures are not democratic. They encourage the false notion that democratic processes cannot serve daily needs.[1]

The obvious goal of group problem-solving is to arrive at a solution to a problem. Sometimes this solution is a statement of policy, at other times it is a program put into action. The solution is arrived at through a problem-solving sequence. The traditional sequence is as follows:



[1] William S. Smith, *Group Problem-Solving Through Discussion* (New York: Bobbs Merrill Company, 1965), pp. 169-170

Identify the problem. How do we know we have a problem? What symptoms or signs do we have that show us that we have a problem? When fish die in our streams, birds die from breathing our air, and plants die from lack of sunlight, we have symptoms of a pollution problem. When the high school band plays fewer and fewer pep songs during a game, the student fans are not cheering the team, and there is a drop in attendance at the games, we have symptoms of a "lack of school spirit" problem.

The group must decide if the symptoms are serious enough to warrant a study of the problem. If it is decided that the problem is serious and deserves the group's attention, then still another question must be asked: "Is this a problem for our group?" Often the problem is outside the power and resources of the group and either must be dropped or passed on to another group that can solve it. In some cases the problem is one that, if given time, will correct itself.

If the group decides to tackle the problem, the second step is to **analyze the problem in detail**. What caused the problem? We can often be more successful if we treat the cause rather than the symptoms. We can't end campus demonstrations merely by stopping the demonstrators with armed guards or requiring parade permits. We must consider the root causes and attempt to eliminate them. We can't correct pollution by cleaning up the beaches, restocking the rivers with fish, and planting more trees. We will temporarily erase the outward symptoms, but the pollution will still be there and will appear again in the same forms until we eliminate the cause.

Some groups are wise enough to realize that they cannot solve all the problems. After a careful study of the problem they may decide that the problem is not worth their time, can be better solved by another group or individual, or should be considered at a more appropriate time. Although we hesitate to delay action on a problem, we may find that the group will make a better and more satisfying decision if it is delayed.

If the analysis of the problem indicates that the group should go ahead with its plans to solve it, the next step is to

suggest possible solutions. The best method is to "brainstorm" for all possible courses of action. This is done by suggesting all solutions that come to mind regardless of how impractical or absurd they may sound. After they are all listed, the group can compare them and select a shorter list of the better solutions. This list can then be studied for possible compromises (combining two or more solutions, eliminating one solution in favor of another one, etc.), and a final list of the best solutions can be compiled.

The fourth step is to **select the best possible solution** from the final list. In doing this the group will want to consider such questions as: Is it the best solution for all persons concerned? How difficult will it be to accomplish? Will it correct the cause and not merely the symptoms? Will it require much time and money?

For example: a student council seeks a way to raise funds for bringing famous lecturers to the school. Many methods are suggested, including a student car wash, magazine sales, cake sale, a giant garage sale, or a new student activities fee. Any of these might raise the necessary funds but the group will need to deliberate carefully and choose one that, when adopted, will be the most acceptable to the various interests—the student body, the student council, the faculty, the administration, and the parents. It is often impossible to please them all but the best choice would be one that pleases as many as possible and at the same time raises the necessary funds.

The last step is the action step. We must **put the solution into action**. This may be an easy task if it is implied by the solution chosen. If a student council decides to form two new standing committees for the coming year, the procedure might be as simple as having the president appoint the committees and announce the names to the council. If the council decided to institute an honor system for the student body, the implementation step would be a difficult one. The council would need to meet and convince the faculty, administration, student body, and perhaps even the parents of its value if the system is to be successful. This would require careful planning.

Getting Your Group to Work

With the problem-solving sequence firmly in mind the leader can turn to questions of how he can get his group to work together successfully. The following are suggestions for improving communication in the small group.

Develop a strong relationship among group members. People do not like to be treated as "numbers" or "positions." The leader can make a point of finding out about the goals, fears, hopes, and conditions of his members. People are flattered when you know personal things about them, but this must not be artificial. If the leader doesn't really care, it will usually become evident by the false roles he is forced to play. In order to understand your members' points of view you must get to know them. If you do not stay psychologically close to them, you may find yourself fighting them unnecessarily. You must be able to anticipate their reactions and understand their view of new proposals.

Make the group's work important. People do not like to be a part of a stale or "backward" organization. They like teamwork and they enjoy being a part of a cohesive group. If the leader has doubts (or reflects doubts) about the importance of the group task, he will have difficulty in getting the enthusiasm and cooperation he wants. Avoid asking a person to chair a committee by telling him "Oh, you won't have to do much, the committee doesn't meet often and practically runs itself."

It is also a good idea to develop a "tradition" in the group. This is not always easy to do and must never be forced. As the leader sees opportunities he should emphasize the constructive history of the group—its contributions and progress. Such events as parties, initiation ceremonies, installation services, etc., help in developing "tradition" and add a feeling of permanance to the group.

An occasional re-statement of the group goals will also remind the group of the importance of its work. This can be done in many ways but one easy method is to relate all new projects and decisions to the stated group goals. For instance, if a student council has decided to organize a student-faculty

dance in order to raise money for its projects, the president may, at a business meeting, mention in a complimentary manner the excellent work of the committee and how its efforts contribute to the council's stated goal of developing better student-faculty relations.

Reward members for good work. These rewards can, of course, take the form of prizes and gifts but more important are the small compliments and other gestures of appreciation and recognition. Let individual members know that without their efforts the group would not be as successful. Avoid praising only the persons with higher status positions. Their contributions may seem to more important at the moment, but true cohesiveness is better achieved by making all members feel rewarded for good work.

Plan meetings carefully. The good leader will do his homework and will be ready for the meeting. Prepare needed materials ahead of time and distribute them to the members. Secure an acceptable meeting place with a proper environment for your meeting. The effectiveness of a five-member committee can be reduced by meeting in the first row of seats in a 500-seat theatre. This may sound obvious, but many leaders are unaware of the dramatic effect environment has on meetings. Poor lighting, interruptions, ringing telephones, crowded rooms, or poor heating or air-conditioning could become distractions and hurt the effectiveness of the meeting.

Meetings must also be planned as to type. The members need to know not only what they are expected to accomplish but the method to be used in conducting the meeting. Will the meeting be one for briefing and informing the members? This type of meeting is used to provide members with information, announcements, reminders, etc.

Organizations will often have "planning meetings" in which the members are given opportunities to exercise their creative talents in thinking up new and unusual approaches to their tasks. These are usually informal meetings and require a good deal of time. A student council may wish to have one or two of these meetings at the beginning of the school year in order to get the best ideas of the group together.

Still another type of meeting is the problem-solving meeting. The method has been discussed earlier in this chapter. If the group knows it is meeting for this purpose, the mental attitudes of the members should be geared to decision-making.

We often misjudge a meeting because we did not understand its purpose. The purpose can be announced or it can become a "tradition" or "ritual" of the organization.

Once it becomes a "tradition" the members will recognize its purpose and act accordingly. For instance, the first business meeting of the year for a student council may be a ritualistic meeting in that much of the time may be spent in re-introducing the officers (this was surely done earlier when they were elected), reminding members of committee tasks, and welcoming everyone to a new year.

If this meeting is not understood and accepted as essentially a ritual, it may seem to some a waste of time.

Leading a Meeting

Here are a few suggestions for conducting your small group meetings:

- Get the meeting started on time.
- Keep the discussion on the topic.
- Try for balanced participation, encouraging contributions by all members.
- Try to keep one or two members from monopolizing the meeting.
- Use questions and summaries to keep the meeting moving in a positive and constructive direction.
- At the close of the meeting, summarize what has been said and announce any decisions reached.

Public Communication

Communication in large groups requires special skills of leaders. The two most common skills are public speaking and parliamentary procedure. A knowledge of each is essential to the effective leader.

Public Speaking

The concept of public speaking has undergone significant changes in the past six to ten years. There is no real demand any more for the silver-tongued orator or the flamboyant style of speakers of the past. The audiences of today are seeking speakers who address themselves to the everyday problems in a direct, communicative, and conversational manner. The speaker's platform is no longer a place to perform or exhibit clear diction; it is, instead, a social opportunity to influence behavior and attitudes.

A leader is called upon to speak in public for various reasons: as public relations for his organization, to solicit support for his group's cause, or to present to his own group his current thinking on a subject or problem. In any case he is expected to "play the role of speaker." If a leader understands the role expected of him as a speaker in our society he is prepared to take advantage of these communication events.

The speaker's role has three basic parts: (1) the helper, (2) the informer, and (3) the persuader. Although all three are essential to playing the full role of speaker, the "helper" is the most significant.

The Speaker as Helper

The world is full of speakers competing for the attention of the listeners. The truly successful ones are those who develop a helping relationship between themselves and their audiences. Rather than centering their attention on a topic or subject of special interest to the speaker, the successful speaker will concentrate on doing something worthwhile for his audience. His attention is focused on audience needs, hopes, and desires, as he has perceived them. He asks himself "How can I best be of service to this group on this occasion, and, furthermore, how can I communicate to them my intention of serving their needs?" If he can answer this question satisfactorily he has the best built-in attention-getting device available.

The speaker must first make an analysis of his audience. He must determine to the best of his ability *their* needs as

they see them. This is not an easy task but is worth every minute of time and effort it takes to be as accurate as possible. We are all aware of what happens when no attempt is made to analyze the audience. When a teacher does not study his students he often aims too low or too high. He is either too "academic" or he insults the intelligence of many of his stuents. In the same manner a student speaking to the local P.T.A. may fail to achieve his purpose due to lack of audience analysis. If he intends to seek support for a student council fund-raising activity and does not realize that a large majority of the businessmen present opposed the same project two years ago, he will likely meet with little success. If he had known, he might have changed his appeal to another activity or made a new and more acceptable approach to the controversial activity.

The "audience-oriented" or "helping" approach is a far better technique for holding audience interest and attention than is a series of jokes, stories, or statistics. The communication of your intention to serve their needs must be handled carefully. It is seldom a good idea to state flatly "I'm here to help you," but through a direct and friendly attitude you can communicate that you feel confident that your speech will be worth listening to. Often, merely by avoiding arrogance, dogmatism, and advocacy, you can place your audience in a receptive attitude.

The Speaker as Informer

One of the obvious reasons for listening to any speaker is to gain information—to learn. If the audience feels that the speaker is a good source of information they will give him the attention he desires. If a speaker knows his subject thoroughly and demonstrates a desire to share the information he will command the respect of his hearers.

A leader has been placed in a position of authority; while in this position he gains information and insights that he will be called upon to share. He may be asked by his own group to offer his ideas and observations on a current topic or he may

be asked by an outside group to share his experiences with them.

The Speaker as Persuader

When a leader desires to change the attitudes, beliefs, values, or behavior of an audience, he becomes a persuader. There is no reason to draw a sharp distinction between informing and persuading since both will be used by an effective speaker. The speaker will need to inform as a basis for the difficult job of persuading and he will often use exposition to change attitudes and beliefs. The following are a few suggestions for the leader-persuader:

1. *Use evidence to support your arguments.* Do not depend on people's acceptance of something merely because you said it. Personal opinion is useful in a speech as long as it is designated as such and not stated as "fact." If you state that a majority of the students at your school support the student council, you must either support this statement with evidence (polls taken, random samples, surveys, etc.) or qualify the statement as your opinion ("it is my opinion that a majority . . . "). Evidence is useful in establishing the credibility of your statements. When you use evidence to support your opinion, you are saying in effect that other able and qualified persons agree with you. This evidence usually takes these forms: direct quotes, statistics, examples, reports of research, reports of surveys and polls, etc.

2. *Remember that people do things for their reasons and not for yours.* When you search for arguments and evidence, be sure to seek ideas and materials that will serve as "proof" to your audience and not solely to yourself. You may have the best of reasons for your beliefs and actions but they may not be the same as those of your audience.

3. *Determine your specific purpose before you prepare the speech.* Do you intend to merely stir up the already favorable feelings the audience has about a subject, or do you intend to go a step further and convince the audience to change their beliefs or perform some action as a result of the speech?

You must study your listeners and determine a realistic purpose that can be achieved within the limits of time, audience interest, audience prior knowledge, the occasion, etc. For example, it would be all but impossible to persuade a group of smokers to give up smoking with a 20-minute speech. A more realistic goal would be to persuade them that there is substantial evidence to indicate a relationship between lung cancer and smoking, or you may wish to convince them to cut down on how much they smoke. The choice of the lung cancer topic would be an attempt to get a mental agreement while the "cut down on your smoking" topic would be an attempt to secure action. This action might be difficult to obtain but it is a more realistic goal than trying for the "total abstinence" action.

4. *Avoid negative suggestions.* Try to make all remarks in a positive manner. The salesman who says "You don't need any insurance, do you?" will likely find that most of his contacts "don't." Remarks such as "I don't think many of you are going to agree with me," and "I don't know much about this myself" will defeat a speaker's purpose in persuasion. They might be replaced with "I realize the controversial nature of this subject" or "I became interested in this subject only last month, but since that time I have read a few articles I would like to share with you today."

5. *It's best to present both sides of a controversial issue when talking to persons opposed to your point of view.* The opposition is often "put at ease" and "disarmed" when you seem well aware of their side of the argument and take it into consideration as you present your point of view. If you present only your side of the argument the opposition may mistakenly believe that you are ill-informed or totally unaware that there is another side to the argument.

6. *As much persuasion is achieved by a speaker's personal character as his verbal message.* We believe the men we consider "good" men and often will not listen to the ones we consider "bad." The judgment as to who is a good man varies from person to person. If a persuasive speaker can appear trustworthy and able he has won half the battle. Some of his

character and expertness is determined prior to his speech by his known reputation to the audience. If a person has not yet achieved a high reputation, he can establish a good speaking character by: being well prepared and practiced, adapting his speech to his audience, demonstrating confidence and ease, and showing respect for the audience and their ideas.

How to Prepare and Organize Your Speech

After you have made an analysis of your audience you are ready to begin preparing your speech. Although there is no magic formula for preparing a sppech, there are some basic steps that most speakers use:

- *Determine your purpose.* Decide whether you will inform or persuade and what kind of specific reaction you want from your audience.
- *Select a topic to achieve your purpose.* For instance, if you decide to persuade your audience to vote in the next campus election, you need to choose a topic suited to achieving that purpose. You could speak on "voter responsibility," "the need for a better student government," "the candidates and their platforms," urgent needs at our school," etc.
- *Select an appropriate organizational pattern.* The traditional pattern includes an introduction, the body (including main points), and a conclusion.
- *Prepare the body of the speech in a detailed outline.*
- *Prepare the introduction and conclusion in a detailed outline.*
- *Practice the speech from the detailed outline and make any final changes* that are needed to make it sound appropriate and clear to the audience. This is an important step since a written outline may use a stilted written style of language inappropriate to oral discourse.
- *Prepare speaking notes from your detailed outline.* With the full outline in mind you can now prepare the brief set of notes you will need as you deliver the speech.
- *Practice using the speaking notes.*

The Use of Voice and Gesture

Today's speaker is expected to be informal and conversational in his delivery. He should develop an attitude of directness, including effective eye contact, concrete language, forceful but appropriate gestures, and an "intimate" vocal tone. He needs to appear composed and confident without appearing too "cool" or detached. He needs to talk to the audience in the same earnest manner he uses in lively conversation. The attention of the audience should be drawn away from the speaker's voice and directed to his ideas. This informal manner seems to communicate good will and friendliness.

Bodily action should be natural and controlled. Exaggerated gestures (hands over head, waving hands vigorously, etc.), awkward mannerisms (repeated pushing of hair out of face, looking at the floor, shuffling notes, etc.), and poor posture (leaning on the speaker's stand, drooping shoulders, a "parade rest" stance, etc.) should be avoided. It's not that these bodily actions are "wrong." Under some circumstances they may be appropriate, but they are seldom effective for the public speaker.

Parliamentary Procedure—Why Bother?

Another basic skill related to the communicator-leader is the proper use of parliamentary procedure. Most of our organizations are started by people of good will who will work to make sure that the organization benefits its members. In order to reach this goal it is necessary to set up a group of rules to govern their meetings. We are fortunate that men with experience in various types of organizations have provided us with a rather universal set of rules that we can adapt to the needs of our organization. Thomas Jefferson prepared the first parliamentary manual and, in so doing, demonstrated that our organizations can be "democracy in miniature." Jefferson's rules were modified and expanded by Henry M. Robert in 1876. *Robert's Rules of Order* then became one of the first manuals for parliamentary procedure. The latest revision of Robert's manual was *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, 1970.

This book is probably the single most popular book on the subject in America.

There will be times in your meetings when you will ask yourself if parlimentary procedure is not just a set of rules designed to stymie meetings, more of a barrier to discussion than an aid. This is a popular notion and may be somewhat justified, but it is usually held by an individual who either does not understand the procedure or has never witnessed the procedure used properly. It is true that with groups of twelve or less it might be more practical and efficient to use group discussion methods, but even these groups will unconsciously use such basic procedures as voting, making motions, addressing the chair, etc. Their usual comment is that they aren't using parliamentary procedure, but anyone examing their deliberations will soon notice that they have simply adapted the basic procedure to suit the needs of their group. This is the way it should be.

The larger the group the more often we find a formal set of rules followed. Large groups tend to get unruly and hard to handle due to the many diverse opinions and ideas present in the membership. These groups need a procedure that allows the majority to rule (the goal of any democratic group) and at the same time protects the rights of the minority. The best and most efficient method yet devised for achieving this is the use of parliamentary procedure. It guards against hasty action, gives each person a chance to be heard, provides for order, and ensures majority rule.

There are a few general points that deserve emphasis before discussing the core procedure. For example, I mentioned earlier that small groups might use the group discussion method. I recommend this procedure for the deliberations of the committees of an organization and for organizations which have so few members that consensus is possible and desirable. If the committees of an organization operate properly and take their job seriously, there will be less need for argument and debate on critical motions in the general meetings. It is the duty of the committee to research and discuss the matters referred to it and to make recommendations to

the organization concerning possible actions which might be desirable. This is not to say that all actions proposed by committees should be accepted or adopted. The committee should make its report and, since the report was made for the group's benefit, await the group's reaction. If the group agrees with the report, then all is well; but if they disagree and decide to amend the report, this is their right and the committee should cooperate fully.

Another point of emphasis concerns the proposals or motions made by members of committees. These motions should be made as precisely and accurately as possible. There should be no doubt as to what is being proposed. The members must know exactly what they are being asked to adopt or reject. It is a good idea to have all motions written out, read, and then immediately passed to the secretary or chairman for the sake of accuracy and economy of time. This procedure will also discourage hastily made motions which are not thought out and considered in advance of the meeting. A great majority of your motions should arise from committee deliberations.

Somewhat associated with all I have discussed is the matter of keeping the members, as well as the chairman, informed. Most controversies and misunderstandings arise from lack of information or from suspicion. Much of this can be avoided by providing the members, far in advance of the meeting, with any pertinent facts, so that they can study them before the deliberations start. It is disconcerting for an intelligent individual to arrive at a meeting totally unprepared to make rational and mature decisions. Often a person deeply conscientious about his actions will either refuse to vote, create controversy, or rebel altogether when faced with making decisions without the proper information. Those persons less conscientious but extremely suspicious might have the same reaction.

It might be helpful to prepare a detailed agenda for each meeting and to place a copy of this agenda in the hands of all members before the meeting. The agenda could include a listing of all items of business to come before the group and explanations of those items that might be controversial or

misunderstood, a list of all committees whose reports are due (and the names of the committee chairmen), reminders of actions taken at the last meeting, etc. Such an agenda would not only create interest but might also promote attendance and act as a good promotional document for the organization. Anyone seeing it would realize that the group was active and working. A committee chairman, after seeing his name on the agenda, might have a renewed interest in carrying out his duties and in being in attendance to give his report.

And, finally, it is impossible to overstress the necessity of training the organization in the use of parliamentary procedure. This training process must include not only practice in the procedure's actual techniques but also (to encourage a respect for the rules) a study of the philosophy behind the procedure. Here are a few recommendations concerning this training:*

- The president or chairman should study the procedure privately and inspire a respect in the procedure by conducting his meetings properly and efficiently.
- The organization should appoint a good parliamentarian. This could be either a student, a teacher, or a parent who is capable and prepared to act as a resource person and a critic of the procedure.
- Employ at first only the procedure which the members can use; move to the more complicated procedure as the members grow in their knowledge of its proper use.
- Train the membership through such methods as workshops, mock meetings, demonstrations, and drills.
- Have all the leaders in your organization attend conferences and workshops provided on the state and national level.
- Work to create in all meetings an atmosphere in which members feel free to use the procedure and are not afraid to ask questions when they are confused.

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*Appendix A (p. 00) contains a list of commonly used parliamentary terms. Appendix B (p. 00) is a quick-reference chart on parliamentary procedure.

- Never be satisfied with a procedure that does not provide for an orderly and efficient meeting. In other words, the group must grow, although it may take months or years before a satisfactory procedure is accepted by by the organization.
- Provide your members with a variety of reference materials on parliamentary procedure. The bibliography in the back of this text suggests some of these materials.

Chapter 4

Suggestions and Exercises For Improving Communication Within the Student Council

Self-Improvement

1. Check the bibliography at the end of this text for books in the area of communication theory. Read as many of these as possible and share them with other members of your student council.

2. Choose a leader in your community that you admire and spend a week observing and studying his or her behavior. Try to attend events where he will appear, read anything he has written, talk to others about him, study his background and education, and, finally, try to secure a personal interview with him. The second week do the same with another leader. Continue this procedure until you have studied at least five leaders.

3. Attend speeches given by leaders in your community. Study their good and bad points. Try to decide if any of their speaking techniques would work for you. Do they make mistakes that you wish to avoid?

4. Make the self-inventory suggested in Chapter 3. This exercise should assist you in understanding your self-concept.

5. Are you honest in your estimate of how others view you? Watch carefully the "feedback" you get when you are communicating with others (facial expressions, attention, verbal response, etc.) and analyze it for possible clues to others' concept of you. Are others really receptive to your ideas or are

you fooling yourself by being so "sold" on your ideas that you are blind to their real reactions?

6. Be watchful for evidences of too many judgments in your speech. Try not to criticize others within your group before assessing all the facts. When you are in a group discussion, try to reserve your suggestions and judgments until you have asked for and listened to those of the other members.

7. Are you a democratic or an authoritarian leader? Do you really believe in "government by the people"? Try to exercise democratic leadership although you may find it a difficult and time-consuming task. Check group response to your democratic leadership. Are the members involved and enthusiastic about their tasks? How would they react to authoritarian leadership?

8. In each communication situation ask yourself "Without regard for who is right or wrong, or whether I like or dislike the person I am communicating with, is there anything I can do to keep the channels of communication open between us until an agreement is reached that is satisfying to us both?"

9. Secure a copy of *Parliamentary Procedure: A Programmed Introduction* by Gray and Rea, Scott Foresman Co., 1962. and go through it before you start your business meetings for the year. Secure a copy of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* and become familiar enough with it that you can find answers to your parliamentary questions easily and quickly.

10. Take advantage of your community's resources. There are many teachers, principals, lawyers, ministers, physicians, parents, etc., who would be willing to assist you in your leadership tasks. Don't hesitate to ask for help. The advice of some of these people can make up for a lack of experience in working with groups.

Improving Group Skills Within the Council

1. Make the study of group behavior in your council a pleasant hobby for you. Make the group goals your goals and involve as many people as possible in working toward those

goals. Don't stop with student involvement; get faculty, administration, and parents involved also.

2. Think of two or three groups of which you are an active member and which you can clearly identify as effective or ineffective. Describe to yourself the factors that tend to make one group more effective than the other. Could adjustments be made to increase the effectiveness of some of the groups?

3. Evaluate each meeting. After a meeting be sure to evaluate its effectiveness. This is easy to do if you use a member of your group as a "sounding board." After each meeting sit down with this person and talk over the details of the meeting. Ask each other "Was the meeting a success?"; "What contributed to the success (or failure)?"; "What should be changed or repeated at the next meeting?"

4. Plan workshops for your group in late summer in preparation for the school year. A workshop in group methods for your committee members is a useful activity. You can include suggestions and practice in group problem-solving, task recognition, and group planning techniques. This workshop can also serve as an excellent opportunity for the members of your group to get to know each other. A workshop in parliamentary procedure would also be useful to officers and members alike. The group methods workshop would require one to two full days, while the parliamentary procedure workshop could be accomplished in one-half day. Teachers and leaders for these workshops can be found either in your own group and community or secured from nearby colleges and cities.

5. Groups work better when there is (a) organized activity, (b) a clearly defined and worthwhile goal, and (c) an enthusiastic leader to stimulate and inspire them to work. Try to ensure that these conditions exist in your organization.

6. As you lead group discussions, assist the members by using internal summaries ("Let's take a look at what we have said up to this point.") and well-worded questions to draw out silent members and more and better information. ("What do you think of that, Jerry?"; "Does anyone have information on

this subject?"; "Have any of you had experiences in situations like this?")

7. Study the following items of "presidential protocol."
   - Go to the outgoing officer and obtain any books, files, etc.
   - Never "wise-crack" or play the role of "entertainer" as chairman.
   - Remember to give the floor to the first person who addresses the chair (unless he has had the floor too often and others wish to speak).
   - Incoming presidents should offer a choice of some important job to the runner-up in the election.
   - Praise your fellow officers and committees for their work; do not seek praise for yourself.
   - The chairman should attend only those committee meetings where he is directly involved or invited.

Reaching Out to the School Administration and Community

1. Good public relations is essential to an effective student council. This "outreach of good will" must go to the student body, faculty, administration, and community. Every effort must be made to gain the cooperation and assistance of these groups. A student council that tries to "go it alone," believing that no one cares or understands, is usually selling its community short. It is true that some groups and individuals are impossible to reach with any program or project, but most are "reachable" with patience and hard work.

2. Try an exercise in role playing. Work up role-playing exercises in which members of the council play the roles of faculty members, principal, chairman of school board, etc. Communication lines are often opened and strengthened by attempts to view issues from other points of view.

3. Since lack of the facts in the case is one of the major causes of misunderstanding, it would profit the student council to keep its members informed of its activities. For the same reason the school administration should be kept informed of the council's activities. In order to make the exchange fair and

efficient the administration should inform the student council of actions affecting the student body. Whenever possible, the school administration and the student council should involve each other in their decision-making process.

4. Rather than imposing his authority on the student council by dominating their meetings or by arbitrarily vetoing their actions, the principal should allow the student council their chance to demonstrate responsibility in conducting their own meetings and deciding questions within their realm of authority. The type of respect most councils seek can only be gained by proving themselves responsible groups. This means that most councils must be satisfied with proving themselves with minor issues before the school administration will recognize the group as a mature decision-making body.

5. Although outbursts of violence in campus demonstrations are effective in gaining newspaper headlines and throwing a degree of fright into the establishment, they seldom are constructive in problem-solving. It is seldom that anger, ill feelings, resentment, coercion, and brute force create an atomosphere for cooperation. Even if the establishment "gives in" to some of the demands of the moment, there can be no doubt that the experience will instill resentments and fears that will haunt both groups for years to come. Future negotiations will be held in an atmosphere of suspicion and animosity. Every group should, whenever possible, work toward making progress within the atmosphere of good will and understanding. Only as a last resort should a group use demands and ultimatums.

6. Too many student councils choc their own favorite activities at the school and are not representative in their support of student programs and interests. Often, activities such as student government, student newspaper, debate team, honor society, and fine arts programs appeal to student councils and faculties, over such activities as football, cheerleading, school dances, fraternities, and cake sales. On other occasions, with other councils, the reverse may be true. The point is that each council needs to make an analysis of how well it is repre-

senting the interest and needs of the student body as a whole. What kinds of assistance could your council give to worthy student programs it is not now engaged in supporting?

7. Take every opportunity to make a community contact for your council. Assist the community organizations with their fund drives (volunteers are always needed) and solicit their participation in yours. Make sure the people of the area who are not parents feel welcome at public performances at the school (plays, concerts, etc.). Make good contacts in the local churches, civic clubs, and business groups in order to build your student image and to get an idea of how these groups think and act. In general, make the school activities a part of the total community activity.

8. Remember that "school spirit" includes the academic areas. A truly effective student council will assist the faculty and administration in promoting academic *esprit de corps*. This would include the development of a common spirit of enthusiasm, devotion, and respect for class studies. Many schools do not realize how they would profit by having a high academic reputation as a part of their student image. There are many projects the council might consider in this area: feature stories on faculty members and unusual classroom techniques in the school paper, a "teacher of the year" award, fund-raising projects for needed equipment in selected academic areas, an "awards night" to encourage high academic achievement among the students, promotion of new and better scholarships, etc.

9. Student councils should take a "preventive" approach to problem-solving rather than playing the traditional "trouble-shooting" game. The traditional method for determining group tasks in a council is: "Which problems have become serious enough that this year's council should work toward solving them?" Although this is an admirable goal and solves some of the difficult problems, it is only a band-aid approach to developing a progressive and on-going council. Councils might consider directing at least some of their attention to preventing problems from arising. There isn't as much glory

in heading off a possible problem as there is in a tangible solution to an obvious current problem. Too many councils are so concerned with *their year in office* that they fail to work toward preventing next year's problems. Most councils do not mind solving their own problems, but I am sure most of them would prefer a "planned conflict" with a problem to a "surprise conflict" or a "so-entrenched-it-is-hopeless conflict." In order to take a preventive approach, it may be necessary for the council to sacrifice some of the time and effort it would normally spend on current problems. In the long run, however, a council using this approach may make a far more significant and far-reaching contribution to the student body and its welfare. It will require close cooperation between the council, faculty, administration, and community in identifying the possible problem areas, and wise leadership in applying the preventive efforts and making the transition to next year's council. Quality of accomplishment rather than quantity is the real goal.

10. The student council is an ideal opportunity for self-development. This may sound like a selfish goal but it really isn't. Through the shared responsibility and accountability a person can gain self-awareness, develop his social skills, improve his ability to communicate, develop an appreciation for peer relationships, and gain a working knowledge of the democratic decision-making process. The best way to promote this self-development is through group work and delegated responsibilities. Officers should see that council decisions are "group decisions" and not merely the decisions of a few aggressive students. Officers should also delegate the council's work in such a way as to provide opportunities for not only the council members but all other interested students to participate in the decision-making and task-accomplishing activities of the school. This student involvement will help students develop an identity with their school and its programs.

Appendix A

Common Parliamentary Terms

Adjourn—To close the meeting (may not interrupt a vote).

Amend—A proposal for a change or modification in a main motion.

Appeal decision of chair—To appeal to the assembly to override a ruling made by the chair.

Committee of the whole—To consider a motion informally (using group discussion methods).

Division of the House—To call for an announcement of the number voting for and against a motion (usually called for after a voice vote).

Fix time of next meeting—To fix time for reassembling.

Lay on table—To postpone consideration of a question temporarily (may be brought up in same session or some later session).

Limit debate—To restrict the time available for debate on a motion.

Main motion for general business—A proposal for action concerning the general business of the group.

Make a special order of business—To set a specific time for the exclusive consideration of a particular question.

Object to consideration—To object to the consideration of a motion considered irrelevant or objectionable (must be made before debate begins).

Orders of the day—A request to conform to the order of business.

Parliamentary inquiry—To seek advice from the chair concerning parliamentary procedure.

Postpone indefinitely—To dispose of a motion without voting upon it.

Postpone to a certain time—To delay until a specified time any action upon a pending question.

Previous question—To terminate discussion on a debatable motion by bringing it to immediate vote.

Question of order—To correct an error in parliamentary procedure.

Question of privilege—A request for the chairman to deal with an emergency situation (disorders, offensive remarks, discomfort, etc.)

Recess—To temporarily disband for a specific purpose (vote, lunch, etc.)

Reconsider—To give the group an opportunity to consider again an action already taken (special rules apply here).

Refer to committee—To delay action or investigate further a question by referring it to a committee.

Request for information—To request information concerning the pending business.

Rescind—To cancel an action taken at a previous meeting.

Take from table or to resume consideration—To revive a motion previously laid on the table, or temporarily put aside.

Withdraw a motion—To prevent action on a motion when the maker of the motion has changed his mind (to be made only by maker of the motion).

Appendix B: Quick-Reference Parliamentary Procedure Chart

IN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

	Second Needed	*Amendable*	*Debatable*	*Vote Required*	*Interrupt Speaker*
Fix time of next meeting	yes	yes	no	1/2	no
Adjourn	yes	no	no	1/2	no
Recess	yes	yes	no	1/2	no
Question of privilege	no	no	no	ch.	yes
Lay on the table	yes	no	no	1/2	no
Previous question	yes	no	no	2/3	no
Limit debate	yes	yes	no	2/3	no
Postpone to a certain time	yes	yes	yes	1/2	no
Refer to a committee	yes	yes	yes	1/2	no
Committee of the whole	yes	yes	yes	1/2	no
Amend	yes	yes	*	1/2	no
Postpone indefinitely	yes	no	yes	1/2	no

*—Debatable when motion to which it applies is debatable.

ch.—The chairman can make the decision, but it is a majority vote if appealed.

NO ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

	Second Needed	*Amendable*	*Debatable*	*Vote Required*	*Interrupt Speaker*
Main motion	yes	yes	yes	1/2	no
Take from table	yes	no	no	1/2	no
Reconsider	yes	no	*	1/2	yes
Rescind	yes	yes	yes	2/3	no
Make special order of business	yes	yes	yes	2/3	no
Appeal from decision of chair	yes	no	*	1/2	yes
Suspend the rules	yes	no	no	2/3	no
Object to consideration	no	no	no	ch.	yes
Parliamentary inquiry	no	no	no	ch.	yes
Withdraw a motion	no	no	no	1/2	no
Division	no	no	no	1/2	yes
Point of order	no	no	no	ch.	yes
Request for information	no	no	no	1/2	no

*—Debatable when motion to which it applies is debatable.

ch.—The chairman can make the decision, but is a majority vote if appealed.

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